

**STATE  
REHABILITATION  
COUNCIL  
FOR THE  
DELAWARE DIVISION  
OF VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION**

**2018  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**



# OUR MISSIONS

## THE DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (DVR)

*We provide individualized services to employers and people with disabilities, developing career pathways that link qualified employees to jobs, resulting in greater independence and a more inclusive workplace.*

## THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (SRC)

*We are a consumer-driven organization of members representing DVR Stakeholders.*

**Members are appointed by the Governor and provide advice and support to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.**

FY 2018 SRC Council Members	
<b>Mila Wells</b>	Parent Information Center of Delaware
<b>Stan Mifflin</b>	DVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Ex-Officio Member
<b>Alice Coleman</b>	Delaware Workforce Development Board
<b>Ellen Coulston</b>	Advocate
<b>Karen DiNardo, Vice Chair</b>	Consumer/Former DVR Consumer
<b>Monica Edgar, Chair</b>	Consumer/Client Assistance Program
<b>Alvin Emory</b>	Consumer/Industry
<b>Andrea Guest</b>	DVR Director, Ex-Officio Member
<b>Emmanuel Jenkins</b>	Consumer/Advocate
<b>Janie Libby</b>	Industry
<b>Dale Matusevich</b>	Delaware Department of Education
<b>Jacqueline Poquette</b>	Consumer/Industry
<b>Loretta Sarro</b>	Consumer/Advocate
<b>Despina Wilson</b>	Statewide Independent Living Council
<b>Jamie Wolfe</b>	Consumer/Advocate*

\*Ms. Wolfe passed away on August 22, 2018

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December 4, 2018

The Honorable John Carney  
Governor of Delaware  
Dover Office  
Tatnall Building  
William Penn Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Carney:

Enclosed for your review is the 2018 Annual Report of the Delaware State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). During FY18, the Chair (Monica Edgar) and Vice Chair (Karen Di Nardo) had the goal of building our council with new members along with fresh ideas and motivation. We accomplished that goal with several new members who are knowledgeable about disability issues and will help improve the DVR experience.

We continued to update our policies in order to grow and stay current under the mandates of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Council participated in several activities and shared in accomplishments which strengthened our partnership with DVR, all with the goal of identifying and removing barriers to employment as well as increasing independence for Delawareans with disabilities.

The following are just a few highlights from our 2018 activities:

- Supported legislative issues affecting Delawareans with disabilities
- Jointly established DVR goals and priorities for fiscal year 2018
- Provided input on DVR policies: self-employment, credentials and measurable service gains, on-the-job-training, and criminal history
- Reviewed consumer satisfaction data and made recommendations based on reviewed data input on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan
- Attended Delaware Pathways Conference and the Delaware Transition Conference
- Appointed SRC members to other community boards

In conclusion, the SRC has encouraged the Delaware Disability community to come together to improve the lives of their people by staying current. We intend to stay up-to-date by partnering with other Boards, Councils and working hard to advocate for people with disabilities. I would like to thank our partner, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, for helping the SRC members of the Council and for their time, dedication, efforts and passion.

Thank you for the opportunity to give back to our community through service on this council.

With Warm Regards,  
Moni Edgar

Moni Edgar, Chair  
State Rehabilitation Council

Karen DiNardo, Vice Chair  
State Rehabilitation Council

## THE SRC LEADERSHIP REPORT



The Chair (Monica Edgar) and Vice Chair (Karen DiNardo) of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) are working together to continue our efforts to regroup, educate, update our meetings and the council membership.

The SRC is continuing to grow our membership and have welcomed several new members to our council. We spent some time understanding what our NEW members needed. We heard our members' needs regarding more education around how they could better serve the State Rehabilitation Council, and what their roles and responsibilities are as active council members.

The SRC reviewed several DVR programs and understand how the SRC can stay knowledgeable to support continued success. The Council was provided updates on DVR Programs including: The Advancement through Pardons and Expungements (APEX) Program (which helps people with criminal records go through the expungement and pardon process), self-employment, Pre-Employment Transition Services, assessment, Independent Living, Business Relations and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to highlight a few. We also talked about how DVR works. DVR helps to empower consumers towards employment and independence and they worked with more 600 employers who hired our consumers. The SRC was also informed about how DVR partners with the Department of Education, Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD), Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), Division of Social Services (DSS), and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) and many other organizations and state agencies to achieve shared goals.

The SRC will continue to stay well-versed on Federal and State regulations, review DVR's Needs Assessment Information and continue to attend events at the State level (Delaware Pathways Conference & Delaware Transition Conference) as well as the Federal level (National Council of State Rehabilitation Conference). We will also learn new things, and reach our goals in FY 19.

*Sincerely, Moni Edgar, Chair and Karen DiNardo, Vice Chair*

## MESSAGE FROM ANDREA GUEST, DVR DIRECTOR



Since the implementation of the Workforce Investment & Opportunity Act (WIOA), the DVR program has increased its focus on service to students with disabilities. Preparing young people for careers through early engagement and opportunities to work enhances their chances for successful employment as adults.

In Fiscal Year 2018, we implemented our fourth year of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) as mandated through the WIOA. In the past four years more than 4,000 students with Individualized Employment Program's (IEP) and 504 plans have received a Pre-ETS service such as work-based learning, career counseling, self-advocacy, and counseling for postsecondary education. The goal is to prepare students for their career pathway in school and a smooth transition to post-secondary training or employment. In December, more than 800 students, teachers, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors, and parents attended our Annual Transition Conference to learn about work expectations and self-advocacy.

At DVR, we understand the importance of the business community. They are critical partners for us in helping our clients achieve successful employment. Last year, more than 800 VR job seekers went to work at more than 500 different places of business. It takes dedicated staff, competent providers, and motivated consumers to achieve this success. We look forward to developing innovative practices and new business alliances to assist more people to go to work in their community.

*Sincerely, Andrea*

# SRC AND DVR:

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR EMPLOYMENT

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) created a shared vision:

*Assisting people with disabilities in Delaware to develop their talents and abilities and find meaningful employment*

The SRC plays an integral role with DVR in administering the public vocational rehabilitation program and evaluating DVR's effectiveness in providing vocational rehabilitation services to Delawareans with disabilities. As partners, the SRC and DVR:

- ❖ Hold retreats to evaluate DVR's effectiveness in achieving the agency's mission, review and develop goals and priorities, and identify new directions.
- ❖ Evaluate consumer satisfaction with DVR services and provide feedback.
- ❖ Conduct periodic assessments to determine the needs of individuals with disabilities in Delaware.
- ❖ Provide direct input into the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan specifically addressing new services and required reporting elements.

# STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL COMMITTEES

## **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is responsible for developing the agenda for full Council meetings. The committee addresses management issues relating to the function of the Council and provides oversight for the duties and responsibilities of the Council and its committees and project teams as governed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

## **Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee is responsible for recruitment of new SRC members to meet its representative requirements. SRC members represent people with disabilities, advocates and family members, employers, and rehabilitation and education professionals. The Chair of the Council serves as the Chair of the Membership Committee. Recruitment efforts include maintaining a presence at area conferences, including the LIFE conference, and making presentations before disability-related advocacy groups such as Partners in Policymaking.

## **Policy, Procedure, and Performance Committee**

The SRC has several members who participate on the DVR Policy Committee which develops policy and procedures for DVR client services. These SRC members are part of the Policy, Procedure, and Performance committee. In addition to sharing information on agency activities in the development of DVR policies and procedures with the entire SRC, the committee brings the SRC perspective to the Policy Committee.

## **Government Relations Committee**

The Government Relations Committee is responsible for maintaining awareness of issues and activities of the councils and committees around the state that address disability-related issues and monitoring legislative initiatives. The committee reports on noteworthy activities of other councils and the State legislature and facilitates the SRC's advocacy on issues of concern. The committee also coordinates the SRC participation in the DVR budgeting and funding process.

## **Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Committee**

On a triennial basis, the DVR and the SRC are required to do Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). The CSNA committee takes an active role in determining the way the assessment will be conducted, designing the assessment questions, assisting in the implementation, and reviewing the results.



# 2018 DVR SRC ANNUAL RECOGNITION

## AWARDS LUNCHEON



On Monday, December 10, 2018, the State Rehabilitation Council and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation held their Annual Workplace Inclusion Recognition Awards Luncheon at the Dover Downs in Dover, Delaware. The event recognizes the contributions made by the staff of organizations and agencies and the participants in the successful vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities.

The event began with words of welcome from DVR Director, Andrea Guest, followed by a brief talk by the SRC Chairperson, Monica Edgar. Ms. Edgar thanked the many members and staff who contribute to the work of the SRC and shared some of her experiences growing up as an individual with a disability.

Following a buffet lunch, and prior to the presentation of awards, the attendees were treated to several short video clips. The first clip highlighted accomplishments of Project Search, specifically at Christiana Hospital, the original site in Delaware. Project SEARCH is a one-year school-to-work transition program that takes place entirely in the workplace. It is a collaboration between employers, DVR, the Department of Education, local school districts, and local service provider agencies. Project Search is now occurring in locations in each county and has resulted in successful employment for at least 90% of the participants.

The second video clip had been created to spotlight businesses in Delaware who are partnering with the Council of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation's National Employment Team (NET). The NET brings together vocational rehabilitation agencies with multi-state businesses to encourage the employment of people with disabilities throughout their organizations. As the result of NET activity, two DVR participants have obtained employment with Microsoft in Seattle. DVR will be using the video clip in its social media.

DVR Deputy Director Jocelyn Langrehr facilitated the presentation of the recognition awards. Awards were presented as follows:

### **Outstanding Businesses**

Deluxe Company  
Delaware Transit Corporation  
Dogfish Head Brewery

### **Outstanding Employees**

Alexandra Joyce  
Etienne Williams  
Daz'mir James  
Mike West

### **Outstanding Service Provider**

Mary Jo Verdery

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## *In Memoriam*

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On August 22, 2018, SRC Member Jamie Wolfe died in Bayhealth Hospital at the age of 52. Ms. Wolfe was an active member of our SRC as well as a recipient of the Employee of the Year Award from the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities; however, her impact on the state went far beyond her impact on DVR. She was a tireless advocate and educator on the rights of people with disabilities to live full lives, independently and in the community. Most recently, Ms. Wolfe was the chairperson of the State Council for People with Disabilities. She is also a past recipient of the SCPD's annual Mary Custis "Custie" Straughn Memorial Award and their John Jefferson Memorial Award for Advocacy.

Ms. Wolfe was a key advocate for passage of Medicaid for Workers with Disabilities, Delaware's Medicaid Buy-In program. The program enables individuals to buy Medicaid insurance that includes provisions vital to workers with disabilities. She was also instrumental in developing legislation regarding other important issues such as personal attendant care, accessible housing, and the rights of individuals with disabilities to receive services in the community.

Ms. Wolfe's upbringing played a significant role in the person she became. She was mainstreamed for most of her education. With assistance from DVR, Ms. Wolfe attended the Delaware Technical & Community College, the University of Delaware (where she later taught Disability Studies), and the Delaware State University, all the while advocating for physical and programmatic accessibility. Her impact on the lives of people with disabilities in Delaware is immeasurable.

# MEET OUR HONOREES

## NEW CASTLE COUNTY

### The Deluxe Company Employer of the Year



**L-R:** Andrea Guest, DVR Director; David Clarke, the Deluxe Company; Stan Greene, the Deluxe Company; Paul Army, the Deluxe Company; and John Ludwig, DVR Business Relations Specialist.

The Deluxe Corporation, a client-focused, global, technology solutions company, supports their employees with disabilities through flexible work scheduling, interpreter services, and assistive technology.

The company is open to considering a wide range of types of disabilities for positions from data process to management, and has provided lighted alert systems, ergonomically correct seating, and desks that may be raised or lowered.

The Deluxe Corporation requires all of their employees to attend a yearly certification on disability and diversity awareness. They provide natural supports in the workplace by pairing new employees with experienced subject matter experts.

The Operations Supervisor contacts the DVR Business Relations Specialists when there is an employment opening, prior to announcing it to the general public. Deluxe Corporation is a strong believer in the employment of people with disabilities.

### Alexandra Joyce Employee of the Year



**L-R:** Andrea Guest, DVR Director; Alexandra Joyce; and Stephanie Spadaccini, DVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Alexandra Joyce began her involvement with DVR as a transition student from St. Mark's High School. Her guidance counselor described her as "bright and motivated," two words that definitely describe her. Ms. Joyce wanted to attend college with the goal of paralegal studies. She began at Wilmington University in 2010 with DVR support.

Ms. Joyce jumped right into legal-related activities. She joined legal clubs, job-shadowed professionals, and obtained a part-time job as a records clerk at a law firm, all while making outstanding grades while attending college on a full time basis. She also became very involved with Canine Partners for Life, a nonprofit provider of service dogs.

When Ms. Joyce told her DVR counselor that she wanted to become an attorney, her counselor gave her full support. She applied to law school during her senior year at Wilmington University and, after graduating Summa Cum Laude, began her legal studies at the Widener University Delaware Law School in August of 2014 with a full academic scholarship for all three years!

Immediately after graduation, Ms. Joyce began studying for the bar exam. Meanwhile, she obtained a judicial clerkship for the Delaware Supreme Court. In October, she received the wonderful news that she had passed the bar exam. Ms. Joyce continued her clerkship until August of 2018 after which she began employment as an associate attorney at a Wilmington law firm.

## Etienne Williams

### Employee of the Year

Ms. Williams has been on an upward trajectory of success since completing her CNA certification. Her success is a direct result of her “can do attitude,” often working several jobs to maintain her household. She has had several personal setbacks along the way, including a fire, a serious car accident, and the death of two sisters. She is raising six children, three of her own and three of her sister’s. Through it all, Ms. Williams has maintained her employment, increased her wages, and excelled in her profession. She has taken advantage of training opportunities to advance her wages and career responsibilities, most recently obtaining her certification to dispense medication.

In February of 2018, Ms. Williams was recognized by the Delaware Department of Public Safety for saving the life of a relative of resident in the nursing facility where she is employed. She gave CPR to the individual who had experienced cardiac arrest. In June of 2018, Ms. Williams was named the top certified nursing assistant by the Delaware Healthcare Facilities Association.

Ms. Williams benefited from DVR services in attaining her success. She was assisted through counseling and guidance, in obtaining driving training to enable her to work at hours when public transportation is not available, and with placement services through Training for Results.

## MEET OUR HONOREES

### ❧ STATEWIDE SERVICE PROVIDER ❧

#### Mary Jo Verdery

##### Service Provider of the Year

Mary Jo Verdery, a placement vendor with skills in American Sign Language, puts 100% effort into her work. She maintains open lines of communications with both DVR staff and DVR participants and shows true concern for the employment success of the participants.

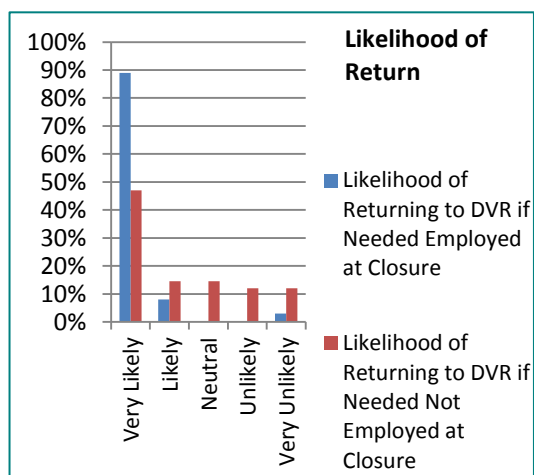
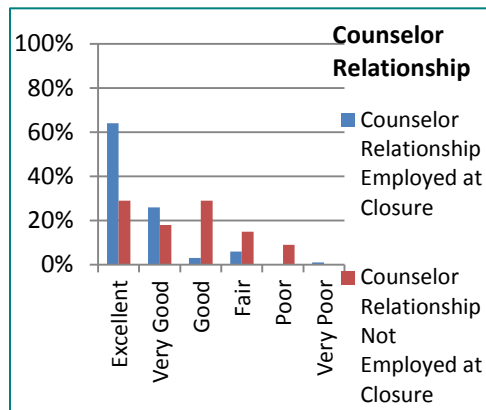
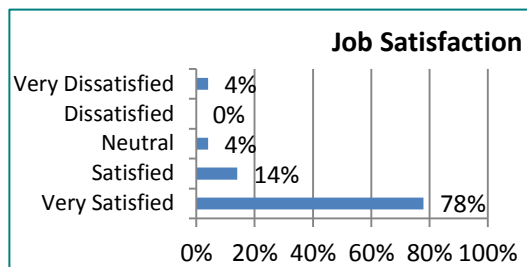
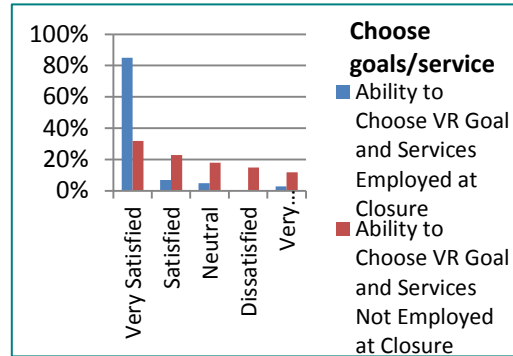
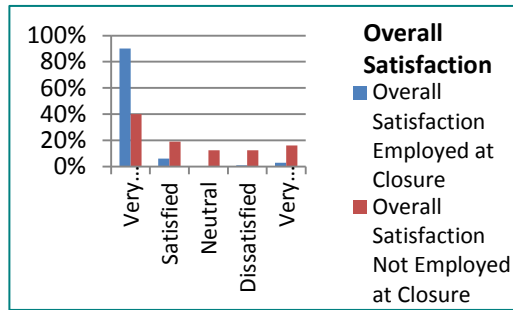
Ms. Verdery is willing to travel throughout the state, particularly in Kent and Sussex counties, and works diligently to identify employment opportunities.

She works well with all participants, even those who are challenging, and provides realistic feedback. Her passion and talent are respected greatly.



**L-R:** Andrea Guest, DVR Director; Mary Jo Verdery; and Mike Papili, DVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

# 2018 CONSUMER SATISFACTION RESULTS



The 2018 Consumer Satisfaction Survey was conducted by mail with a survey included in the closure letter of each participant who had received DVR services. Because phone surveys were not conducted, the participation rate was lower than previous years with 80 responses from individuals who were employed at case closure and 39 responses from individuals who were not employed at closure. DVR and the SRC, in conjunction with the WIOA leadership team, are looking at additional opportunities and means of collecting consumer satisfaction data.

On each of the satisfaction measures, individuals who had successfully obtained employment rated DVR more favorably than those who did not.

- 96% of employed individuals and 59% of not employed individuals rated overall satisfaction as very satisfied or somewhat satisfied.
- 97% of employed individuals and 62% of not employed individuals indicated that they were very likely or somewhat likely to return to DVR for additional services if needed.
- 92% of employed individuals and 55% of not employed individuals indicated satisfaction in their opportunities to select their goal and services.
- 93% of employed individuals and 67% of not employed individuals indicated a positive relationship with their counselor although the former group indicated many more excellent relationships.

Job satisfaction among individuals who were employed at closure was 92%.

Among individuals who were not employed at closure, the primary reason, in 71% of those reporting, was that they had left DVR services due to a disability-related reason.



# MEET OUR HONOREES

## ∞ KENT COUNTY ∞

### Delaware Transit Corporation

#### Employer of the Year

The Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC), operators of transit programs throughout Delaware, employs people with disabilities as part of their commitment to diversity and employing the best workforce possible. The partnership with DVR is the result of meetings to learn and discuss how individuals with a range of disabilities may be accommodated in hiring, including the testing processes. The DTC Operations Manager reaches out to a DVR Business Relations Specialist to assist the recruitment efforts for qualified applicants with disabilities. DTC and DVR work together to find workable solutions for individuals who require work accommodations such as flexible work hours/locations and removal from environments with fume/chemicals. In addition, DTC is a host site for Project SEARCH, hosting nine students who are gaining valuable skills and experience.



**L-R:** Andrea Guest, DVR Director; Kevin Reagan, Delaware Transit Corporation; Todd Webb, DelDot; and Dana Seaberg, DVR Business Relations Specialist.

### Daz'mir James

#### Employee of the Year

Daz'mir James has been working as a teaching assistant at the Little School at the Kids Cottage for more than two years. He always engages the children on their level and creates opportunities for them to learn and discover. Mr. James is inquisitive and self-motivated, and he asks for clarification to understand the "whys" of work processes.

Prior to his employment, Mr. James was a participant in the Project SEARCH at Bayhealth. While there, he interned at their childcare facility, staying after completing his internship hours to complete the online modules to receive his Training for Early Care and Education I certification. Mr. James was also named Intern of the Year at the Project SEARCH at Bayhealth graduation ceremony. His employer wrote, "If I could clone and hire another 'Mr. Daz,' I would do so without hesitation."



**L-R:** Lisa Enright, Capital School District; Andrea Guest, DVR Director; Daz'mir James; and Dale Matusevich, Department of Education.

# 2018 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Successful Rehabilitations:	881	
Most Significantly Disabilities	213 (24%)	} 95%
Significant Disabilities	621 (71%)	
Transition Youth Rehabilitated	262	
Total Clients Served:	6,184	
Clients with Most Significant Disabilities	2,112 (34%)	} 95%
Clients with Significant Disabilities	3747 (61%)	
New Applicants in FY 2015	2,288	
Determined Eligible	1,534	
Acceptance Rate	93%	
New Transition Students	729	
Transition Students/Youth Served	2,162	
Average Hourly Wage for FY 2017 closures		
All closures	\$11.71	
Transition	\$10.43	
Supported Employment	\$9.42	
Adults (not TR or SE)	\$12.82	
Individuals in Delayed Status at the end of FY 2016	543	

# MEET OUR HONOREES

## ✧ SUSSEX COUNTY ✧



**L-R:** Andrea Guest, DVR Director; Hilary Wright, Dogfish Head Brewery; and Denise Crockett, DVR Business Relations Specialist.

### **Dogfish Head Brewery** **Employer of the Year**

DVR has developed a relationship with a recruiter at the Dogfish Head Brewery. Her coming to DVR to conduct onsite job interviews is just one example of the flexibility provided by the company.

During the peak hiring season, and with an eye on creating a diverse workforce, the recruiter ensured that opportunities were available for DVR participants. A recently hired participant indicates that the experience has been a life-changing event for herself and her family, setting her on her desired career pathway.

### **Mike West** **Employee of the Year**

Mike West demonstrates the definition of job longevity! After some restoration services from DVR, and with the assistance of his DVR counselor and employment specialist, Mr. West obtained employment with a property management firm in Sussex County in the summer of 2012.

In his six years on the job, he has worked at four different properties performing routine maintenance such as fixing hot water heaters, fixing plumbing, working on stoves and air conditioners, dry wall repairs, and moving appliances.

He also maintains the exterior of the property and grounds. During the course of his employment, Mr. West has received raises and holiday bonuses in addition to health benefits and vacation leave!



**L-R:** Andrea Guest, DVR Director; Deb Post, Retired DVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; Mike West; and Stacey Bragg, DVR Business Relations Specialist.



# 2018 EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION

During the February, 2018 Meeting, the SRC Council conducted its Effectiveness Evaluation. The SRC responses and comments related to the effectiveness of DVR based on a Likert scale of 1 being the lowest mark and 5 being the highest mark are as follows:

## ***Goal 1: Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities.***

Builds Relationships with Business	3.642857
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Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment	3.5
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Services support Financial Independence	3.307692
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Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory	4
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### Comments:

- I feel that in Kent County we have a limited number of business relationships-especially when working with outside employment specialist agencies
- This is an area that DVR excels in, especially with the focus on career pathways and credentials. Continue to focus of adults with disabilities as opposed to Pre-ETS and transition.
- DVR promotes Pre-ETS and WBL (work-based learning) opportunities but it's difficult for family to know this if school/education is your only communication pathway.
- DVR needs to strengthen its relationship with businesses that wish to provide employment with individuals with disabilities.

## ***Goal 2: Support training programs that reflect opportunities in the labor market.***

Helps consumers to focus on their Career Pathways	3.285714
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Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials	3.357143
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Coordination with WIOA Partners	3.428571
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### Comments:

- We work well as an agency to inform each other of training programs available for a specific skill set.
- DVR adapts programming to meet current trends and business needs.
- Project SEARCH is awesome, but schools don't share this information.

- Training programs that are more closely aligned with labor market's needs need to be implemented.

***GOAL 3: Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work.***

Quality of Pre-Employment Transition

Services 3.142857

Quality of Transition Services 3.214286

Coordination with Partners

(e.g. DOE & DDDS) 3.642857

Comments:

- Coordination with Partners: Although have many examples of working with these other agencies, somehow the relationship/partnership links are not strong enough or don't come across in a cohesive way. Consumers are often confused as to where to go for help.
- In my three years with DVR transition I have seen many improvements. I would like to find a way to connect better especially with DDDS to coordinate services for high school students.
- We don't serve 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> graders and we need to.
- Services are evolving.
- Leadership in DOE: do they support transition...or do they believe transition is only a systems change. Pre-ETS are fantastic if educators are sharing this valuable information.
- Additional transition programs and more outreach need to be implemented.

***OTHER COMMENTS:***

- A flowchart or map of the system/process with all the community partners would be very helpful.
- I would love to see better options for job seeking (agencies that contract with DVR). I feel the current services are redundant and dull.
- DVR needs to get out into the community more specifically by encouraging businesses and schools.

# DVR OFFICE LOCATIONS



## New Castle County

**Wilmington** (302) 761-8275

**Newark** (302) 368-6980

**Middletown** (302) 696-3180

## Kent County

**Dover** (302) 739-5478

## Sussex County

**Georgetown** (302) 856-5730

